

Appl. No. 10/719,639
Amdt. dated April 23, 2008
Reply to Office Action of January 23, 2008

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 10-18, 21-30, and 32-36 are currently pending and stand rejected. After reopening prosecution following Applicants' appeal of a previous final rejection, the Examiner, in the non-final Office Action mailed January 23, 2008, rejected all of the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,902,553 filed Nov. 18, 1988 and issued Feb. 20, 1990 to Hwang et al. ("Hwang"). These rejections are respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

First, the Examiner interprets "match" as used in Hwang "as meaning that the two compounds are identical." 2008-Jan-23 Office Action, page 3. The Examiner's interpretation is incorrect. "Match" as used in Hwang means that the rattle-reducing additive and the polymeric material are *compatible* from the standpoint of *mixing* well at high temperatures. Indeed, in giving meaning to the word "match," Hwang notes that "the two components are miscible in the molten state but partly phase separate when cooled to below the crystallization temperature of the thermoplastic polymer." Col. 4, lines 54-56. The examples Hwang provides of the additive material are liquid or semi-solid at room temperature, and of relatively low density. Col. 4, lines 22-28. In contrast, the examples Hwang provides of the polymer base material are crystalline polymers, having very high molecular weights, higher melting points, and generally solid at room temperature. Col. 4, lines 29-39. Furthermore, Hwang teaches that the additive and base polymer "phase separate" when cooled. If the components were "identical" (under the Examiner's interpretation of "match"), no such phase separation would occur.

These groups of compounds (the rattle-reducing additive compounds on the one hand, and the base polymer compounds on the other hand) are *significantly* different; "match" certainly cannot be interpreted to mean that they are "identical." Instead, "match" means just what Hwang says it means – miscible in the molten state. Accordingly, Hwang does *not* teach "polybutylene" as being suitable for the rattle-reducing additive.

Second, the Examiner states that the rattle-reducing additive of Hwang is "partially soluble in the polymeric matrix and phase-separates at room temperature from the polymeric matrix *to form a separate layer which substantially completely coats said target region.*" *Id.*

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(italics added). The italicized portion of the preceding passage appears nowhere in the patent. The Examiner does not cite to any portion of the patent. The Examiner does not refer to any law of chemistry that would support this conclusion.

Hwang focuses on premixing the rattle-reducing additive (such as a saturated aliphatic compound) with a polymeric matrix. Hwang repeatedly refers to the additive being mixed *in* the polymeric matrix, as opposed to *on* the matrix – that is, mixed throughout, as opposed to surface coated. See, e.g., col. 4, lines 8-20 and lines 45-51; col. 6, lines 3-6; col. 9, lines 16-40; claim 1, lines 48-50; claim 11, lines 23-25; and claim 17, lines 48-53. It is this uniform distribution of the additive through the matrix that provides the desirable permeability, low rattle, and reduced coefficient of friction properties of Hwang. Although the additive phase separates upon cooling, it does not and would not “form a separate layer which substantially completely coats said target region.”

In summary, not only does Hwang not teach the conclusion of the Examiner quoted and italicized above, but Hwang's teachings indicate that such a result would not deliver the benefits contemplated by Hwang.

For at least the reasons articulated above, the Examiner's rejection of all of the pending claims is improper and should be withdrawn.

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Conclusion

Applicants believe that this Patent Application is now in condition for allowance.

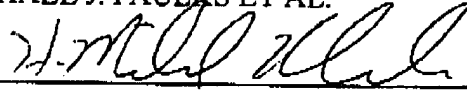
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The undersigned may be reached at: 920-721-7844.

Respectfully submitted,

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